

ECU Newsletter



The last few months have seen some exciting new additions to the ECU programme including **Art Therapy Classes** facilitated by renowned contemporary artist **Ingrid Christie** and a **Trauma Group** aimed at helping members of the community deal with the effects of trauma and recovery from chemical dependence.

In this edition you will learn more about the study on **Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)** in the treatment of alcoholic liver disease, underway here at Castle Craig.

Read on further to discover how the ECU patients have formed their very own **music band** and just performed their first gig.

Meanwhile fitness instructors **Joanne Whyte** and **George Woodfield** continue to forge ahead with their fitness and lifestyle revolution. The fitness regime now includes **yoga** and regular walks in the Borders countryside.



WELCOME TO SUMMER 2009 AT CASTLE CRAIG HOSPITAL'S EXTENDED CARE UNIT!

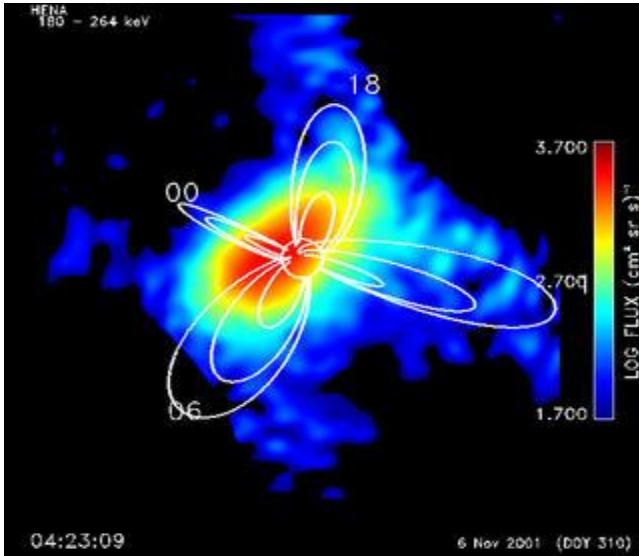
And welcome to another action-packed edition of the ECU newsletter!

Read on to find out what patients think about our latest activities and therapies and how they have helped them on the road to recovery, here at Castle Craig.

One female patient described how amazed she was that this simple excursion had put her *"in touch with her feelings"* and gave her a sense that she was *"really beginning to heal"*. The weekend walks along Peeblesshire's riverbanks have been a big hit with the ECU community. One patient declared that he had *"never had so much fun in the rain!"* as he blazed a trail across Peeblesshire.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Arrives at Castle Craig

HBOT is another example of the **pioneering spirit** of Castle Craig Hospital's fight to treat Addictive Disease.



Group Therapy for Trauma

A new group started in March for the specific treatment of patients who have experienced trauma in their lives as well as chemical dependency.



The last few months have seen the Hyperbaric Oxygen chamber swing into action. This has given patients the option of requesting the treatment as part of their ongoing recovery.

Richard Scanlan the group facilitator said:

A clinical trial with **The University of Edinburgh** is underway to show whether bone marrow stem cells are mobilised into the bloodstream following HBOT, in patients who recently drank alcohol to excess, with or without chronic liver disease. The trial will also examine whether there is an improvement in liver function following HBOT. We will keep you posted with the results.

*'This group is aimed at helping survivors of trauma get the skills they need to go from being **victims** to **survivors** and ultimately **thrivers** in recovery.'*

One patient from Glasgow told us that HBOT made him feel "invigorated", his thinking was "sharper" and he was able to relax more - although he did admit that it felt a bit strange at first.

One member described the group as helping her feel relaxed and positive about very difficult experiences, another said:

"Before I came to Castle Craig I would have done anything to stop drinking... If this is going to help me make better choices in the future and my brain functions better I am all for it."

"I have been to a rehab before but this stuff kept coming back. It's really helpful to have somewhere to talk about it with other survivors."

A Close Brush with Art Therapy!

Professional artist Ingrid Christie has given patients the chance to *Brush Up* on their art skills, while allowing them to express themselves in a totally unique way. Patients do not need to have had any previous art experience, however we do suspect that we may have some budding Picassos on our hands!



"Patients are surprised when they uncover their, often hidden, creative side. The benefits of this are increased self esteem and a general openness of the spirit, something that is lost during active chemical dependence." - Ingrid Christie

The Art Group sessions have been tailor-made in a way that allows patients to express themselves as creative individuals in a unique and stimulating way. Patients are taught a variety of creative styles and devices that are conducive to self-expression, alleviate stress and complement the recovery process. Recovery is about enjoying life and the art group is another enriching medium which enables people see that creativity is fun.



One group member described the difficulty he had being able to express himself at first:

'I had forgotten how good it feels to create something. I have spent the last years destroying everything good in my life. When I began to paint I felt I was doing something good for a change... I can begin to feel optimistic about the future. I am sober and I have talents that I never knew existed.'



The ECU Resident Band



This month saw the first performance of the ECU resident band. Ably assisted by their roadie **Guy Heath** (staff) and his sound system they took to the stage for their first gig.

The band doesn't have a name yet but they are inviting peers to help come up with one. So far ideas have been ***The Recoveries*** and ***The Craigs...*** suggestions welcome!

The gig was a great success and the band is a welcome addition to the entertainment at ECU. All band members should be congratulated for their initiative and working with the staff to turn an idea into a reality.

Community members are invited to continue contributing ideas on improving the entertainment nights or for that matter any other part of treatment.

Forthcoming Events

- **04/07/09** - Fishing Trip
- **05/07/09** – All-Day Walk in the Scottish Borders

- **11/07/09** - Visit to New Lanark Heritage Centre
- **18/07/09** - Fishing Trip
- **25/07/09** - All-Day Walk in the Scottish Borders
- **01/08/09** - Visit to Traquair House and Gardens
- **08/08/09** - Fishing Trip
- **08/08/09** - All-Day Walk in the Scottish Borders
- **29/08/09** - Visit to Deep Sea World and Forth Rail Bridge
- **04/09/09** - Recovery Evening/Buffer
- **05/09/09** - Fishing
- **12/09/09** - All-Day Walk in the Scottish Borders
- **19/09/09** – Visit to Edinburgh Castle
- **19/09/09** – Fishing Trip
- **27/09/09** - All-Day Walk in the Scottish Borders

YOUR NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!



We want to deliver a newsletter that reflects your community so if you have anything you want contribute to the ECU newsletter why not join the team? If you have a story to tell about your recovery that you think will help or inspire others **get on board!**

Contact Richard Scanlan, ECU Team Leader.

Until next issue we wish you a happy, peaceful and productive stay at ECU.